



Safety Spot

Community Risk Reduction

PLAYGROUND SAFETY



PLAY IT SAFE!

With active supervision and basic safety tips, every day at the playground can be a walk in the park. The Colorado Springs Fire Department wants all our kids to enjoy the parks and play it safe. Next time you take your kids to play at the playground, keep in mind these easy safety tips to prevent an injury.

Ensure that children use age-appropriate playground equipment. Separate play areas for bigger kids and children under five should be available and maintained. For babies who are mostly crawling or at best learning to walk, the play area should have a smooth and easy surface to walk on. If your baby has fairly good head control and can sit up with support (usually around nine months old), give the baby (bucket-shaped) swings a try.

Avoid playgrounds with non-impact absorbing surfaces, such as asphalt, concrete, grass, dirt, or gravel. Recommended surface materials include sand, pea gravel, wood chips, mulch, and shredded rubber. Rubber mats, synthetic turf, and other artificial materials are also safe surfaces and require less maintenance. Surfacing should be at least 12 inches deep and extend at least 6 feet in all directions around stationary equipment. Depending on the height of the equipment, the surfacing may need to extend farther than 6 feet. For swings, make sure that the surfacing continues, in the back and front, twice the height of the suspending bar. So if the top of the swing set is 10 feet high, the surfacing should extend 20 feet.

NATIONAL FACT:

Falls are the most common type of playground injury, accounting for more than 75% of all playground-related injuries. Lack of supervision is associated with approximately 45% of playground-related injuries.



Action Steps You Can Take:

- ☐ Actively supervise children on playgrounds. It won't be hard - they'll probably be calling for you to watch them climb, jump and swing.
- ☐ Check playgrounds where your children play. Look for age- appropriate equipment and hazards, such as rusted or broken equipment and dangerous surfaces. Report any hazards to the school or appropriate local office.
- ☐ Teach children that pushing, shoving or crowding while on the playground can be dangerous.
- ☐ Little kids can play differently than big kids. It is important to have a separate play area for children under 5.
- ☐ Double check with your school and child care center to make sure they have age-appropriate, well-maintained playground equipment.
- ☐ If there are any hazards in a public or backyard playground, report them immediately and do not allow children to use the equipment until it is safe.
- ☐ Report any playground safety hazards.